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THE NECESSITY OF LOW TEMPERATURES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF VACCINE VIRUS.

The fact has not been sufficiently emphasized that vaccine virus can not be depended upon to give "takes" unless it is kept at a low temperature, i. e., one not far above the freezing point of water. If it can be kept at or below the freezing point so much the better. There is no danger of keeping it too cold.

The length of time that vaccine virus may remain potent under unfavorable temperature conditions varies according to other circumstances, such as initial potency and reaction of medium. In emergencies virus kept under relatively unfavorable conditions for a short time may be used. Favorable results may be secured with virus so kept, but if success does not follow its use the failure should not be attributed to poor quality of the product.

The United States Pharmacopœia, ninth decennial revision, specifies temperatures between 4.5° and 15° C. for vaccine virus; the latter figure given is in all probability higher than is desirable.

The dating requirements of the United States Treasury Department provide that the dates beyond which vaccine virus can not be expected beyond reasonable doubt to yield its specific result (i. e., the expiration date) shall be indicated as not later than three months after date of manufacture or issue during the period September 16 to April 30, and not more than two months after date of manufacture or issue during the period May 1 to September 15. The shorter period of potency of vaccine virus during the summer as compared with winter temperature is well known. For long journeys in warm weather special refrigerating devices should be used for shipping vaccine virus. After reaching their destination the packages should be placed immediately in a metal container, and this should be kept directly in contact with ice till the vaccine is used.

References to the necessity for keeping vaccine virus cold appeared in the Public Health Reports for May 11, 1917, and for November 30, 1917.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH, APRIL AND MAY, 1920.

The accompanying table is reprinted, by permission, from the Statistical Bulletin of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. for June, 1920. The figures are based on a strength in excess of 13,000,000.

Death rates per 100,000 for principal causes, April and May, 1920, and year 1919.

[Industrial Department, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.]

Causes of death.	Rate per 100,000 lives exposed.		
	May, 1920.	April, 1920.	Year 1919. ¹
Total, all causes.....	927.7	1,085.6	1,063.0
Typhoid fever.....	4.2	3.3	7.3
Measles.....	13.1	13.3	3.5
Scarlet fever.....	4.8	7.0	3.9
Whooping cough.....	6.2	6.6	3.2
Diphtheria.....	16.2	19.7	20.9
Influenza.....	25.4	61.5	96.9
Tuberculosis (all forms).....	144.5	163.0	156.5
Cancer.....	62.9	66.5	67.0
Meningitis (all forms).....	7.9	7.2	6.4
Cerebral hemorrhage.....	58.3	65.0	59.8
Organic diseases of heart.....	116.8	130.4	113.9
Pneumonia (all forms).....	90.8	124.6	117.2
Other respiratory diseases.....	20.0	24.2	17.0
Diarrhea and enteritis.....	8.8	12.0	16.9
Bright's disease.....	70.4	77.7	73.5
Puerperal state.....	16.9	21.9	20.0
Suicides.....	6.0	5.9	6.8
Homicides.....	5.0	4.4	6.9
Other external causes (excluding suicides and homicides).....	49.9	52.1	80.4
Traumatism by automobile.....	9.0	8.1	10.7
War deaths.....	(²)	(²)	16.6
All other causes.....	199.3	219.3	184.9

¹ Based upon final tabulations for year 1919.

² Less than 0.05 per 100,000.

DANGER FROM FLIES RECOGNIZED BY COURT.

The Supreme Judicial Court of Maine has decided ¹ that a guest who had contracted for a two weeks' stay at a hotel was justified in leaving before the expiration of the two weeks when the dining room was infested with flies.

A contract was entered into for a two weeks' stay at a hotel. After three or four days the guests left, paying the regular transient rate for the time they had been at the hotel. The reason assigned for leaving was that the flies in the dining room constituted a nuisance and were dangerous to health. No complaint was made regarding other conditions at the hotel.

The proprietor sought to recover for the full two weeks' stay contracted for, and he succeeded in the lower court. But the supreme court granted the motion of the defendant for a new trial, holding that the guests were justified in leaving the hotel for the reason that they did. The opinion treats at great length of the dangers of the fly and quotes from public health literature on the subject.

¹ Williams v. Sweet, 110 Atl., 316.